

ITEM: 6

SUBJECT: City of Auburn, Wastewater Treatment Plant, Placer County

BOARD ACTION: *Consideration of NPDES Permit Renewal and Cease and Desist Order.*

BACKGROUND: The City of Auburn is located in Placer County. The Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), which serves the community, is located to the southwest of Auburn and discharges to Auburn Ravine. The treatment plant currently serves a population of approximately 13,000. Order No. 98-189 currently regulates the WWTP for the discharge of 1.67 mgd of disinfected, tertiary treated municipal and commercial wastewater to Auburn Ravine, which is tributary to East Side Canal, Natomas Cross Canal, and the Sacramento River. The treatment system consists of bar screening; grit removal; biological treatment in an oxidation ditch and unlined, aerated equalization pond(s), including nitrification; secondary sedimentation; coagulation and filtration; disinfection; and dechlorination. Sludge is dewatered with a belt filter press and removed to a landfill. The City of Auburn owns and contracts for the operation of its WWTP.

The proposed permit contains a significant number of new effluent limitations. Time schedules are included to provide time for the Discharger to (1) implement best practicable treatment and control (BPTC) technology and (2) to meet final effluent limitations for copper, dibromochloromethane, dichlorobromomethane, lead, nickel, silver, and zinc. Interim limitations are included for copper, dibromochloromethane, dichlorobromomethane, lead, nickel, silver, and zinc.

Cease and Desist Order

The proposed Cease and Desist Order includes a time schedule for complying with new effluent aluminum, ammonia, chloroform, manganese, methyl tert butyl ether (MTBE), nitrite, nitrate+nitrite, and organochlorine pesticides limitations included in the proposed NPDES permit.

ISSUES:

- The City has recommended that effluent data alone be utilized to establish whether hardness-dependent metals present a reasonable potential to exceed water quality standards. While the comments have merit, the situation for Auburn is unique in that the effluent and receiving stream hardness have potential to shift dramatically. Also, the available dilution is considered minimal and can fluctuate greatly. While the worst-case hardness, at R-1, was utilized to establish reasonable potential, compliance with the proposed permit limitations utilizes actual time-of-sampling hardness data which is fully protective of water quality while eliminating unwarranted violations.

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- Residents neighboring the WWTP have commented that they believe the compliance schedules for CTR constituents, especially trihalomethanes, are overly generous in light of the May 2000 adoption date of the California Toxics Rule.
- The City commented that it does not believe that percolation from the equalization basin has degraded groundwater. Neighboring residents believe the 5-year time schedule for providing BPTC is excessive.

Mgmt. Review _____
Legal Review _____

17/18 March 2005

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